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1872

WESTERN RESERVE
CLEVELAND, O.
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Greeley, Horace.

MR. GREELEY'S RECORD

ON THE QUESTIONS OF

Amnesty and Reconstruction,

FROM

THE HOUR OF GEN. LEE'S SURRENDER.

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It has been widely asserted, since the Cincinnati nominations, that Mr. Greeley has been a consistent enemy of the South. If this means only that he was hostile to Slavery while it existed, and an early advocate of Emancipation and Enfranchisement for the Blacks, it is true; not otherwise.

The following compilation, from The Tribune, of Mr. Greeley's most notable utterances on the subjects of Amnesty and Reconstruction, from the news of Gen. Lee's surrender onward, is respectfully submitted.

New York, June 1, 1872.

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MR. GREELEY'S RECORD.

On the 10th of May, 1865, the day after Gen. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Mr. Greeley wrote the following for THE DAILY TRIBUNE, in which it duly appeared as leading article the next morning:

MAGNANIMITY IN TRIUMPH.

We had hoped to print herewith the President's Proclamation of Amnesty and oblivion to the partisans of the baffled Rebellion, and we do not yet despair of receiving it before we go to press, though no portion of it has yet been received. We are apprised, however, by telegraph from Washington, that its tenor was publicly debated in that city yesterday, while our State Senate was agitated by a kindred discussion. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that strenuous efforts are being made to swerve the President from the course to which his judgment and his feeling alike incline him, by stigmatizing it as involving infidelity to Principle or to Party. Others will be heard on this point, though we were to keep silence: we claim, therefore, our equal right to set forth our views, that they be accorded such weight as they shall be deemed to deserve.

We hear men say—"Yes, forgive the great mass of those who have been misled into rebellion, but punish the leaders as they deserve." But who can accurately draw the line between leaders and followers in the premises? By what test shall they be discriminated? Some of the arch-plotters of Disunion have never taken up arms in its support, nor have they held any important post in its civil service. Where is your touchstone of leadership? We know none.

Nor can we agree with those who would punish the original plotters of Secession, yet spare their ultimate and scarcely willing converts. On the contrary, while we would revive or inflame resentment against none of them, we feel far less antipathy to the original upholders of "the Resolutions of '98"—to the disciples of Calhoun and McDuffie—to the Nullifiers

of 1832 and the "State Rights" men of 1850—than to the John Bells, Humphrey Marshalls and Alex. H. H. Stuarts, who were schooled in the National faith, and who, in becoming Disunionists and Rebels, trampled on the professions of a lifetime and spurned the logic wherewith they had so often unanswerably demonstrated that Secession was Treason. Whether they weakly yielded to the madness of the hour, hoping that they might ultimately "ride the whirlwind and direct the storm" to some ill-defined but beneficent purpose, or surrendered their judgment and their loyalty to that imposture of "State Sovereignty" which they had always held in just contempt, or were driven by sheer cowardice and fear of bodily violence into a course condemned by all their better impulses, we protest against any discrimination whereby this class shall be screened or favored. We consider Jefferson Davis this day a less culpable traitor than John Bell.

But we cannot believe it wise or well to take the life of any man who shall have submitted to the National authority. The execution of even one such would be felt as a personal stigma by every one who had ever aided the Rebel cause. Each would say to himself, "I am as culpable as he; we differ only in that I am deemed of comparatively little consequence." A single Confederate led out to execution would be evermore enshrined in a million hearts as a conspicuous hero and martyr. We cannot realize that it would be wholesome or safe—we are sure it would not be magnanimous—to give the overpowered disloyalty of the South such a shrine. Would the throne of the House of Hanover stand more firmly had Charles Edward been caught and executed after Culloden? Is Austrian domination in Hungary the more stable to-day for the hanging of Nagy Sandor and his twelve compatriot Generals after the surrender of Vilagos?

We plead against passions certain at this moment to be fierce and intolerant; but on our side are the Ages and the voice of History. We plead for a restoration of the Union, against a policy which would afford a momentary gratification at the cost of years of perilous hate and bitterness.

We have borne for a quarter of a century the unjust imputation of hating the South, when we hated and sought to subvert only Slavery, the scourge alike of South and North, and the sole cause of discord between them. We have done what we could—of course, not always wisely—to baffle, to circumscribe, and ultimately to overthrow, the Slave Power. At length, through a succession of events which no human being could have devised or foreseen, the end which we sincerely hoped but hardly expected to see, is plainly before us. American Slavery is visibly in the agonies of dissolution; if we live a year longer, we shall almost certainly see it laid in the grave; and, whenever abolished here, its expulsion from the last rood of Christendom that it now curses cannot be postponed five

years. Let us take care that no vindictive impulse shall be suffered to imperil this glorious consummation.

Unquestionably, there are men in the South who have richly deserved condign punishment. Whoever is responsible for the butchery of our Black soldiers vanquished in fight, or the still more atrocious murder of captives by wanton exposure and privation in prison-camps, stands in this category. But the immediate issue concerns not the dispensation of justice to individuals but the pacification of a vast republic. He who fancies that *all* the exhibitions of cruelty or perfidy have been the work of Rebels has but a superficial knowledge of our current history.

Those who invoke military execution for the vanquished, or even for their leaders, we suspect, will not generally be found among the few who have long been exposed to unjust odium as haters of the South, because they abhorred Slavery. And, as to the long oppressed and degraded Blacks, so lately the slaves, destined still to be the neighbors, and we trust at no distant day the fellow-citizens, of the Southern Whites, we are sure their voice, could it be authentically uttered, would ring out decidedly, sonorously, on the side of Clemency—of Humanity.

Mr. Greeley also wrote on that 10th day of April, 1865, the following, which succeeded the foregoing in next morning's TRIBUNE:

RECONSTRUCTION.

One of the most doleful prognostics to which our great struggle has tempted the enemies of the Republic affirmed the impossibility of reconciling the Southern People to the Union they had renounced, defied, and would fain have subverted. "What will you *do* with your Poland after you shall have conquered it?" triumphantly asked a Briton of a Unionist, not anticipating the obvious answer—"We will liberate the Poles." Nothing but Universal Freedom was needed to render the South preponderantly loyal when Secession held her dumb and rigid in its embrace; nothing more was needed to render even South Carolina a decidedly Union State. To make any State disloyal, you had to count its aristocracy everything, its working classes nothing; and, though this was the political *status* actually existing at the outbreak of the Rebellion, it was an artificial *status*, which yielded readily to the rude shock of war. From the hour wherein the President issued his first Proclamation of Freedom, a preponderance of the numbers, the sinews, and the prayers of the South, ardently adhered to the side of the Union, and only liberty of speech and act were required to render that preponderance effective. To recognize the humanity and

vindicate the personal rights of all the Southern people was to overthrow the Rebellion and restore the Union. And this is the essence of "reconstruction."

Hence, we deprecated the adoption by Congress of any elaborate or even definite project of State restoration; hence we confidently look for a speedy and thorough reëstablishment of Peace and return to the ways of Industry and Thrift under the ægis of the Union. The threat of protracting the war by guerilla bands hiding in swamps and mountain fastnesses is idle. It might be possible for the Government to impel a frenzied handful to this resort by wholesale confiscation and cruel rigor; but no such madness is possible. We have had a great Civil War, wherein blood has flowed like water and property been destroyed as though it were dross; we have fought it out like men; and now we will all set to work to repair its ravages as rapidly and thoroughly as we can. All being now free, and most of us poor, we shall all set to work to rebuild our burned houses, replant and till our wasted fields, and repair our dismantled canals, railroads, &c., at the earliest possible day, thus securing work to the idle, bread to the hungry, and opening vistas to comfort and independence for all. Our lamented dead cannot be restored; but the wounded will be nursed, the cripples cared for, with grateful tenderness, while we multiply the inventions and labor-saving machinery whereby the ravages and losses of War shall be speedily effaced or counter-balanced. We have a great Public Debt; but a moderate tax on the pernicious luxuries consumed among us will pay its interest and soon begin the reduction of its amount; while bounteous crops of Grain, Meat, Cotton, &c., with large and steadily increasing drafts upon our mountains and glens of precious ore, will combine to pay off our foreign creditors and secure a balance of trade in our favor. UNION—PEACE—LIBERTY—with these inscribed in light on our banner, we shall move firmly, proudly on to the fulfilment of our country's magnificent destiny. May she be henceforth without exception a terror to oppressors and evil-doers, and a beacon of hope and cheer to the enslaved and down-trodden throughout the habitable globe!

Articles kindred in spirit to the foregoing were written by him throughout the ensuing months, when the assassination of Mr. Lincoln had wrought the North into a frenzy of grief and wrath which would hardly tolerate suggestions of forbearance and mercy.

After the series of signal Republican triumphs in the State Elections of 1866 had culminated in the re-election of Gov. Fenton, by an increased majority, with a Legislature which was understood to favor Mr. Greeley's election to the U. S. Senate, he dashed the hopes of his friends by writing and publishing in THE TRIBUNE of Nov. 27th, the following:

THE TRUE BASES OF RECONSTRUCTION.

About to start for some weeks' sojourn in the West, whence I cannot readily and constantly confer with the general public, I wish to leave my contribution to the general mass of suggestion and criticism touching the true bases of National restoration and concord so plainly set forth that it cannot be misquoted nor misapprehended.

That I have long held the main foundations of a genuine, enduring rësettlement of our disturbed and upturned National structure to be UNIVERSAL AMNESTY and IMPARTIAL SUFFRAGE, must be tolerably well known. It only remains to be said that I commend them not as reciprocal concessions, but as common benefits. I trust our great differences are to be composed and ended by no grudging, higgling compromise—no pea-nut dicker. It is essential to the North that the South should be thoroughly tranquilized and rëassured; it is essential to the South that her principal body of Agricultural Laborers—her peasant cultivators—should live and labor in contentment based on perfect trust that their rights of person and property—their earnings and their homes—are as secure and inviolate as those of the proudest magnate in the land. There is no Northern, no Southern interest in the premises, but a common interest of the whole American people.

I am for Universal Amnesty—so far as immunity from fear of punishment or confiscation is concerned—even though Impartial Suffrage should for the present be resisted and defeated. I *did* think it desirable that Jefferson Davis should be arraigned and tried for treason; and it still seems to me that this might properly have been done many months ago. But it was not done then; and now I believe it would result in far more evil than good. It would rekindle passions that have nearly burned out or been hushed to sleep; it would fearfully convulse and agitate the South; it would arrest the progress of reconciliation and kindly feeling there; it would cost a large sum directly, and a far larger

indirectly; and—unless the jury were scandalously packed—it would result in a non-agreement or no verdict. I can imagine no good end to be subserved by such a trial, and—holding Davis neither better nor worse than thousands of others—would have him treated as they are.

I hope to see Impartial Suffrage established by very general consent. Many will favor it because they hold it eminently wise and just; others because they are tired of contention about negroes, and wish to put an end to it. And the one simple, obvious mode of taking the negro out of politics is just to treat him as a man. He will cease to be an object of special interest or championship from the hour that the law disregards the immaterial circumstance of his color, and treats him only as a human being.

I trust the States will generally accord to Blacks the common rights of Manhood, irrespective of the Nation and of each other; and I trust they will agree to place those rights under the protection of the Federal Constitution. This may not, in one sense, be necessary; yet it is best to leave no "loop to hang a doubt upon." The whole country needs absolute peace and rest. I am very willing that each State should impose a moderate poll-tax on every citizen, and allow no one to vote who shall not have seasonably paid this tax. I hold that lunatics, idiots, criminals, vagrants, and public paupers, have no natural right to vote, and that they ought not to be enfranchised. If there be negroes—as I presume there are—who choose to prowl over the country, begging and stealing, I think these should not be allowed to vote. But every honest, diligent, industrious, useful citizen, however lowly, ought to be a voter; and that State is weakened and imperiled which excludes any such from her electoral body.

I dislike the suggestion of an "intelligence" basis for suffrage. Let us not be deluded by false analogies and vague abstractions. In a State where each child grows up within sight of free school-houses wherein he is more than welcome to be a pupil, it is perfectly reasonable to prescribe that those only who can read may vote. Where half the people have not only been denied all public facilities for education, but have grown up under laws which made teaching them a crime, the case is very different. Establish common schools in the South, and you may fairly prescribe that no one shall vote *after* 1876 who does not know how to read. But do not put out a man's eyes and then punish him for blindness.

It would be morally impossible to enforce fairly and uniformly an intelligence test in the South. Just think of Mayor Monroe, with his chief of police and first marshal, sitting as a board on the eve of an exciting election to determine how many and which of the Blacks of New-Orleans were so literary as they should be to make them voters! Fancy the Copperheads of Southern Maryland passing on the literary pretensions of their late slaves, from whom they feared defeat in an exciting political

contest! The bare attempt to enforce such a test at the South will manifestly inflame and distract that entire region. I trust it will be forborne.

I commend Impartial Suffrage as required by the true interest of all concerned; yet I cannot admit that it is a matter in which the North has no rightful concern. The Blacks are a portion not merely of the Southern but of the American People. They played an important and beneficent part in our great Civil War. We cannot ignore the obligations springing from our necessity and their loyalty. I hold that honor and good faith absolutely constrain those who triumphed in that struggle to take care that their humble supporters and backers shall not be made to suffer for taking the side of the Union. To say now, in view of the recent past, "Let the Southern negroes have such rights only as their White (late Rebel) fellow-citizens shall see fit to accord them," would be ingratitude and perfidy such as might well invoke the lightnings of heaven. No matter at what cost, we of the North must take care that the Southern Blacks are not left at the mercy of that diabolic spirit which manifested itself through the late massacres of Memphis and New-Orleans.

"But there is the Federal Constitution in your way," I hear objected.

Perhaps I do not comprehend the force of this objection. Let me illustrate my view of it by a familiar example. Suppose Gen. Grant, when he first approached the boundary of Tennessee—but no, let us suppose that Gen. Lee, when in 1863 he reached the southern boundary of Pennsylvania, had found his way barred by a pompous, puffy personage, who accosted him as follows: "Sir, I give you notice that this is the 'sacred soil' of Pennsylvania; I am one of her magistrates, and, in her name and authority, and in virtue of that Federal Constitution which you have sworn to obey, I command you to turn back!"—it is just possible that the General would have ordered the justice to get out of the way, but more probable that he would have simply kept on without vouchsafing the judicial magnate a word.

We have been engaged in a fierce, desperate, protracted struggle for the very existence of the Republic, whereof the Constitution is but an incident. (I know there were those nominally on our side who said they fought for the Constitution; but I never heard of their hurting anybody.) In the progress of that struggle, it became necessary to call the Blacks to the rescue of the imperiled Nation. Had we made them no promises whatever, our obligations resulting from our peril and their services in averting it would not have been essentially lessened. Had we been worsted, they must have shared our misfortune, and gone under the feet of the triumphant Rebels. Had we ended the struggle by treaty or compact, they must have been governed by the terms of that compact. But we were *not* worsted; we did not compromise nor end the war by treaty; we were entirely and absolutely triumphant; and I hold it a moral obligation thence resulting that we shall guarantee and secure their absolute, perfect free-

dom. To prove unfaithful to this obligation is to bury ourselves in perfidy and enduring shame. And this responsibility, springing directly from the National rescue from ruin, I hold far before and above the letter of the Constitution.

The soundness and urgency of this view would not have been so palpable had the Rebels, after the utter collapse and disappearance of their Confederacy, evinced a grain of common sense. Had they so acted that their friends might have plausibly argued that the Blacks were safe in their hands, we might have guessed, or trusted, or hoped, that the most vital rights of the Freedmen would be respected and shielded by State action; and thereupon gone to sleep. But the last shots of the war had barely ceased to echo when Southern legislatures, assembled by Mr. Johnson's Provisional Governors, began to concoct and enact laws bearing exclusively on the Freedmen which would have disgraced the worst days of Egyptian or of Algerine despotism. For instance: no reasonable person ever objected, while Slavery existed, to laws placing the Blacks in Slave States under police surveillance, and forbidding them to keep or bear arms; but such acts became absurdly tyrannical from the moment wherein Slavery disappeared; and the wrenching of their arms by Rebels from honorably discharged Union soldiers, under color of State authority, solely because the Unionists were Blacks, was a very cowardly mode of renewing the war of Rebellion. So of all acts revived or re-enacted which shut Blacks out of the witness-box in cases where only Whites were parties, or inflicted on them any kind of disability which was at the same time an indignity. This kind of legislation (see *McPherson's Manual*) was common to all the Rebel States, though that of Mississippi was probably the worst. I rejoice that South Carolina has had the good sense to repeal her share of it, and I hail her action in this respect as greatly conducive to an early restoration of the Union. But it is proved unsafe to trust to local authority and opinion, which may be right to-day and wrong to-morrow: we must place the essential rights of every American citizen under the express guardianship of the Federal Constitution. That will be the end of controversy; until then, even unsuccessful attempts to abridge them will prove a grave and general calamity.

I have said that I favor both Universal Amnesty and Impartial Suffrage on their respective merits, each without regard to the other. I hold that the North is bound to insist on Manhood Suffrage—not in the South only, but in every State and Territory—because of the service required of and rendered by the Blacks in putting down the Rebellion—that it would be perfidy and baseness, in view of all the facts, *not* to insist on this. I hold the South bound to accord Suffrage to the Blacks, as an important and useful, though humble, portion of her people, whom it is her interest as well as her duty to conciliate and satisfy, even though the North did not desire it. There is no conflict between the interests and duties of the North on one side and the South on the other—what is best

for each, or either, is best for both—the only collision is between their respective resentments and prejudices. The North wants to keep at least the leading Rebels under ban indefinitely; the South—that is, a majority of the dominant caste at the South—wants to keep the negroes under foot—despised, powerless, and often abused by the White ruffians, whose crimes the better class disavow, but neither prevent nor punish. The loyal North has demonstrated her ability to keep the Rebels out of Congress; the Rebel South has likewise proved her power to prevent indefinitely the due ratification of the Constitutional Amendment. This dead-lock affords to those whom I must consider the more generous and far-seeing minds of either section an opportunity which, once lost, may never return. Even though the South were able to force her leaders into Congress, they could not hope for full restoration to power and public favor; even though the North were able to force Impartial Suffrage on the South, it would prove of little value while resisted by a strong majority of the dominant caste there. But let North and South strike hands on the basis of Universal Amnesty with Impartial Suffrage, and the resulting peace will be perfect, all-embracing and enduring. Each section will gain everything and lose really nothing.

As to how the Blacks will vote if enfranchised, I have not inquired, and do not care to know. That they will not vote for the reëstablishment of Slavery, nor for their own disfranchisement, nor to exalt to power those who burn their school-houses and mob their camp-meetings, I take to be self-evident. They may make some mistakes at first; but experience will tend steadily to their diminution and correction. I do not concur with the careful mother who insisted that her son must be kept out of the water till he should have learned to swim. And I feel confident that Blacks, like other men, will vote first to secure their own rights, then to promote the welfare of their country.

If the South shall insist on her abstract right to hold the Blacks as a subject race, the North will doubtless insist on the indefinite disfranchisement of all the prominent Rebels, and matters will thus go on as they have gone for the last year. I must still cherish my opinion that this is unwise; but I shall stand with my own people, while awaiting the calmer and wiser view that I am confident must ultimately prevail. The disinterested will say, "Let the Rebels remain under the ban so long as they insist on keeping the Blacks there"—and they will say so with ample reason. If the adjustment I urge should ultimately fail, and, in the mutations of party ascendancy, the Rebels should be let up and the Blacks be kept down, I shall regret it as much for the sake of the South as of the North; and I shall feel that the blame does not all attach to the South. And, whatever the immediate issue, I shall bate no jot of heart or hope that at last—and at no very distant day—our people will be thoroughly harmonized and united on the basis of Impartial and Universal Freedom.

H. G.

In the spirit of the foregoing (which made Roscoe Conkling a U. S. Senator), Mr. Greeley, on learning that his doing so was essential, repaired, in May following, to Virginia, and became surety for Jefferson Davis, in order that he might be liberated on bail. On his return to New York, he received a summons from Hon. John Jay, President of the Union League Club, to appear before said Club, and there respond to an arraignment of his conduct aforesaid, over the signature of thirty-odd members of that Club. To this citation, Mr. Greeley responded as follows:

BY THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

To Messrs. GEO. W. BLUNT, JOHN A. KENNEDY, JOHN O. STONE, STEPHEN HYATT, *and* 30 *others, members of the Union League Club:*

GENTLEMEN: I was favored, on the 16th inst., by an official note from our ever-courteous President, John Jay, notifying me that a requisition had been presented to him for "a special meeting of the Club, at an early "day, for the purpose of taking into consideration the conduct of Horace "Greeley, a member of the Club, who has become a bondsman for Jef- "ferson Davis, late chief officer of the Rebel Government." Mr. Jay continues:

"As I have reason to believe that the signers, or some of them, disapprove of the conduct which they propose the Club shall consider, it is clearly due, both to the Club and to yourself, that you should have the opportunity of being heard on the subject: I beg, therefore, to ask on what evening it will be convenient for you that I call the meeting," &c., &c.

In my prompt reply, I requested the President to give *you* reasonable time for reflection, but assured him that *I* wanted none; since I should not attend the meeting, nor ask any friend to do so, and should make no defense, nor offer aught in the way of self-vindication. I am sure my friends in the Club will not construe this as implying disrespect; but it is not my habit to take part in any discussion which may arise among

other gentlemen as to my fitness to enjoy their society. That is their affair altogether, and to them I leave it.

The single point whereon I have any occasion or wish to address you is your virtual implication that there is something novel, unexpected, astounding, in my conduct in the matter suggested by you as the basis of your action. I choose not to rest under this assumption, but to prove that you, being persons of ordinary intelligence, must know better. On this point, I cite you to a scrutiny of the record:

The surrender of Gen. Lee was made known in this city at 11, p. m. of Sunday, April 9th, 1865, and fitly announced in THE TRIBUNE of next morning, April 10th. *On that very day*, I wrote, and next morning printed in these columns, a leader entitled "Magnanimity in Triumph," wherein I said:

"We hear men say:—'Yes, forgive the great mass of those who have been misled into rebellion, but punish the leaders as they deserve.' But who can accurately draw the line between leaders and followers in the premises? By what test shall they be discriminated? * * * Where is your touchstone of leadership? We know of none.

"Nor can we agree with those who would punish the original plotters of Secession, yet spare their ultimate and scarcely willing converts. On the contrary, while we would revive or inflame resentment against none of them, we feel far less antipathy to the original upholders of 'the resolutions of '98'—to the disciples of Calhoun and McDuffie—to the Nullifiers of 1832, and the 'State Rights' men of 1850—than to the John Bells, Humphrey Marshalls, and Alex. H. H. Stuarts, who were schooled in the National faith, and who, in becoming Disunionists and Rebels, trampled on the professions of a life-time, and spurned the logic wherewith they had so often unanswerably demonstrated that Secession was treason. * * * * * We consider Jefferson Davis this day a less culpable traitor than John Bell.

"But we cannot believe it wise or well to take the life of *any man* who shall have submitted to the National authority. The execution of even *one* such would be felt as a personal stigma by every one who had ever aided the Rebel cause. Each would say to himself, 'I am as culpable as he; we differ only in that I am deemed of comparatively little consequence.' A single Confederate led out to execution would be evermore enshrined in a million hearts as a conspicuous hero and martyr. We cannot realize that it would be wholesome or safe—we are sure it would not be magnanimous—to give the overpowered disloyalty of the South such a shrine. Would the throne of the House of Hanover stand more firmly had Charles Edward been caught and executed after Culloden? Is Austrian domination in Hungary more stable to-day for the hanging of Nagy Sandor and his twelve compatriots after the surrender of Vilagos?

"We plead against passions certain to be at this moment fierce and intolerant; but on our side are the Ages and the voice of History. We plead for a restoration of the Union, against a policy which would afford a momentary gratification at the cost of years of perilous hate and bitterness. * * * * * * * * * * *

"Those who invoke Military execution for the vanquished, or even for their leaders, we suspect will not generally be found among the few who

have long been exposed to unjust odium as haters of the South, because they abhored Slavery. And, as to the long oppressed and degraded Blacks—so lately the slaves, destined still to be the neighbors, and (we trust), at no distant day, the fellow-citizens, of the Southern Whites—we are sure that their voice, could it be authentically uttered, would ring out decidedly, sonorously, on the side of Clemency—of Humanity."

On the next day I had some more in this spirit, and on the 13th an elaborate leader, entitled "Peace—Punishment," in the course of which I said:

"*The New York Times*, doing injustice to its own sagacity in a characteristic attempt to sail between wind and water, says: 'Let us hang Jeff. Davis and spare the rest.' * * * We do not concur in the advice. Davis did not devise nor instigate the Rebellion; on the contrary, he was one of the latest and most reluctant of the notables of the Cotton States to renounce definitively the Union. His prominence is purely official and representative: the only reason for hanging him is that you therein condemn and stigmatize more persons than in hanging any one else. There is not an ex-Rebel in the world—no matter how penitent—who will not have unpleasant sensations about the neck on the day when the Confederate President is to hang. And to what good end?

"We insist that this matter must not be regarded in any narrow aspect. We are most anxious to secure the assent of the South to Emancipation; not that assent which the condemned gives to being hung when he shakes hands with his jailer and thanks him for past acts of kindness; but that hearty assent which can only be won by magnanimity. Perhaps the Rebels, as a body, would have given, even one year ago, as large and as hearty a vote for hanging the writer of this article as any other man living; hence, it more especially seems to him important to prove that the Civilization based on Free Labor is of a higher and humaner type than that based on Slavery. We cannot realize that the gratification to enure to our friends from the hanging of any one man, or fifty men, should be allowed to outweigh this consideration."

On the following day I wrote again:

* * * * "We entreat the President promptly to do and dare in the cause of magnanimity. The Southern mind is now open to kindness, and may be magnetically affected by generosity. Let assurance at once be given that there is to be a General Amnesty and *no* general Confiscation. This is none the less the dictate of wisdom, because it is also the dictate of mercy. What we ask is, that the President say in effect, 'Slavery having, through rebellion, committed suicide, let the North and the South unite to bury the carcass, and then clasp hands across the grave."

—The evening of that day witnessed that most appalling calamity, the murder of President Lincoln, which seemed in an instant to curdle all the milk of human kindness in Twenty Millions of American breasts. At once, insidious efforts were set on foot to turn the fury thus engendered against me, because of my pertinacious advocacy of mercy to the vanquished. Chancing to enter our club-house the next (Saturday) evening, I received a full broadside of your scowls, ere we listened to a clerical

harangue intended to prove that Mr. Lincoln had been Providentially removed because of his notorious leanings towards clemency, in order to make way for a successor who would give the Rebels a full measure of stern justice. I was soon made to comprehend that I had no sympathisers—or none who dared seem such—in your crowded assemblage. And some maladroit admirer having, a few days afterward, made the Club a present of my portrait, its bare reception was resisted in a speech from the Chair by your then President—a speech whose vigorous invective was justified solely by my pleadings for lenity to the Rebels.

At once, a concerted howl of denunciation and rage was sent up from every side against me by the little creatures whom God, for some inscrutable purpose, permits to edit a majority of our minor journals, echoed by a yell of "Stop my paper!" from thousands of imperfectly instructed readers of THE TRIBUNE. One impudent puppy wrote me to answer categorically whether I was or was not in favor of hanging Jeff. Davis, adding that I must stop his paper if I were not! Scores volunteered assurances that I was defying public opinion—that most of my readers were against me—as if I could be induced to write what they wished said rather than what they needed to be told. I never before realised so vividly the baseness of the Editorial vocation according to the vulgar conception of it. The din raised about my ears now is nothing to that I then endured and despised. I am humiliated by the reflection that it is (or was) in the power of such insects to annoy me, even by pretending to discover with surprise something that I have for years been publicly, emphatically proclaiming.

—I must hurry over much that deserves a paragraph, to call your attention distinctly to occurrences in November last. Upon the Republicans having, by desperate effort, handsomely carried our State against a formidable-looking combination of recent and venomous apostates with our natural adversaries, a cry arose from several quarters that I ought to be chosen U. S. Senator. At once, kind, discreet friends swarmed about me, whispering "Only keep still about *Universal Amnesty*, and your election is certain. Just be quiet a few weeks, and you can say what you please thereafter. You have no occasion to speak now." I slept on the well-meant suggestion, and deliberately concluded that I could not, in justice to myself, defer to it. I could not purchase office by even passive, negative dissimulation. No man should be enabled to say to me, in truth, "If I had supposed you would persist in your rejected, condemned Amnesty hobby, I would not have given you my vote." So I wrote and published, on the 27th of that month, my manifesto, entitled "The True Bases of Reconstruction," wherein, repelling the idea that I proposed a dicker with the ex-Rebels, I explicitly said:

"I am for Universal Amnesty—so far as immunity from fear of punishment or confiscation is concerned—even though Impartial Suffrage

should, for the present, be defeated. I *did* think it desirable that Jefferson Davis should be arraigned and tried for treason; and it still seems to me that this might properly have been done many months ago. But it was not done then; and now I believe it would result in far more evil than good. It would rekindle passions that have nearly burned out or been hushed to sleep; it would fearfully convulse and agitate the South; it would arrest the progress of reconciliation and kindly feeling there; it would cost a large sum directly and a far larger indirectly; and, unless the jury were scandalously packed—it would result in a non-agreement or no verdict. I can imagine no good end to be subserved by such a trial; and—holding Davis neither better nor worse than several others—would have him treated as they are."

Is it conceivable that men who can read, and who were made aware of this declaration—for most of you were present and shouted approval of Mr. Fessenden's condemnation of my views at the Club, two or three evenings thereafter—can now pretend that my aiding to have Davis bailed is something novel and unexpected?

—Gentlemen, I shall not attend your meeting this evening. I have an engagement out of town, and shall keep it. I do not recognize you as capable of judging, or even fully apprehending me. You evidently regard me as a weak sentimentalist, misled by a maudlin philanthropy. I arraign you as narrow-minded blockheads, who would like to be useful to a great and good cause, but don't know how. Your attempt to base a great, enduring party on the hate and wrath necessarily engendered by a bloody Civil War, is as though you should plant a colony on an iceberg which had somehow drifted into a tropical ocean. I tell you here that, out of a life earnestly devoted to the good of human kind, your children will select my going to Richmond and signing that bail-bond as the wisest act, and will feel that it did more for Freedom and Humanity than all of you were competent to do, though you had lived to the age of Methusaleh.

I ask nothing of you, then, but that you proceed to your end by a direct, frank, manly way. Don't sidle off into a mild resolution of censure, but move the expulsion which you purposed, and which I deserve, if I deserve any reproach whatever. All I care for is, that you make this a square, stand-up fight, and record your judgment by Yeas and Nays. I care not how few vote with me, nor how many vote against me; for I know that the latter will repent it in dust and ashes before three years have passed. Understand, once for all, that I dare you and defy you, and that I propose to fight it out on the line that I have held from the day of Lee's surrender. So long as any man was seeking to overthrow our Government, he was my enemy; from the hour in which he laid down his arms, he was my formerly erring countryman. So long as any is at heart opposed to the National unity, the Federal authority, or to that assertion of the Equal Rights of all Men which has become practically identified with Loyalty and Nationality, I shall do my best to deprive him

of power ; but, whenever he ceases to be thus, I demand his restoration to all the privileges of American citizenship. I give you fair notice that I shall urge the reënfranchisement of those now proscribed for Rebellion so soon as I shall feel confident that this course is consistent with the freedom of the Blacks and the unity of the Republic, and that I shall demand a recall of all now in exile only for participating in the Rebellion, whenever the country shall have been so thoroughly pacified that its safety will not thereby be endangered. And so, gentlemen, hoping that you will henceforth comprehend me somewhat better than you have done, I remain,

Yours, HORACE GREELEY.

New York, May 23, 1867.

Mr. Greeley traversed the South-Western States in May, 1871, in obedience to an invitation to speak at the Texas State Fair, Houston, May 22d. On his return to this City, he was publicly welcomed (June 10) by a large concourse of his friends, and, in reply to an address by E. L. Fancher, Esq., spoke at length on the condition of the South. The following is the more pertinent portion of his remarks on that occasion :—

EXTRACT FROM MR. GREELEY'S SPEECH.

Fellow-citizens, the Ku-Klux are no myth, although they shroud themselves in darkness. They are no flitting ghosts; they are a baneful reality. They have paralyzed the Right of Suffrage in many counties throughout the South, and have carried States that they ought not to have carried; but they are not the only enemies to Republican ascendancy in the South.

There is another influence equally pernicious with theirs, and a great deal more detrimental to the fame and character of the Republican party. I allude to what are known as the "thieving carpet-baggers." [Applause.] Fellow-citizens, do not mistake me. *All* the Northern men in the South are not thieves. The larger part of them are honest and good men, some of whom stay there at the peril of their lives, because they believe it their duty. Next to the noble and true women who have gone down South to teach Black children how to read—nobler

there are not on the earth than these, whom a stupid, malignant, dilapidated aristocracy often sees fit to crowd into negro hovels to live, not allowing them to enter any White society because they are teaching negro children—next to these, who rank as the noblest women in the South, are the honest and worthy Northern men, who, in the face of social proscription and general obloquy and scorn, stand firmly by the Republican cause.

There was a most urgent and special necessity for rigid economy in the reconstructed States of the South, even aside from their impoverishment by war and the disruption of their industry by peace. For despotic government has this advantage over free, that its agencies are apt to be simple and cheap. The old Slave governments of the South were thoroughly aristocratic, and they were very rarely corrupt or prodigal. The planters paid most of the taxes; they decided who should be legislators; and they did not abide jobbers. Legislative stealing was almost an unknown art among them. Then they had no public support of the poor; each subsisted, after a fashion, his own used-up slaves. The Poor Whites lived or died as they might; and, except for the Whites in two or three great cities, there were no public schools: and this made government cheap and taxes light.

With Emancipation came a great change. There was an urgent demand for free schools, and the school-houses had to be built, to begin with; for the public support of paupers, White and Black, and there were no alms-houses; and so with many public institutions. Just when the people were poorest, they were required to bear the heaviest public expenses, though only accustomed to the lightest. Dissatisfaction and complaint were inevitable; but every effort should have been made, every nerve strained, to mitigate them by rigorous economy. I regret to say that the reverse was the course pursued in some States, by men who rode into power on the artillery wagons of the Union, under the flag of Emancipation.

The public is often heedlessly unjust. Let a Government have 10,000 official subordinates in power, of whom 9,900 are honest and true men who do their duty faithfully, while barely 100 are robbers and swindlers, the public will hear a great deal more about the 100 robbers than about the 9,900 true men. The 100 stand out in the public eye—they are always doing something which exposes them to the scornful gaze of the multitude—while the honest and true men pass along silent and unobserved, and nothing is said, very little is *thought*, of them. All attention is concentrated upon the 100, who are defaulting, and stealing, and forging, and running away.

Well, gentlemen, the thieving carpet-baggers are a mournful fact; they *do* exist there, and I have seen them. They are fellows who

crawled down South in the track of our armies, generally at a very safe distance in the rear; some of them on sutlers' wagons; some bearing cotton permits; some of them looking sharply to see what might turn up; and they remain there. They at once ingratiated themselves with the Blacks, simple, credulous, ignorant men, very glad to welcome and to follow any Whites who professed to be the champions of their rights. Some of them got elected Senators, others Representatives, some Sheriffs, some Judges, and so on. And there they stand, right in the public eye, stealing and plundering, many of them with both arms around negroes, and their hands in their rear pockets, seeing if they cannot pick a paltry dollar out of them; and the public looks at them, does not regard the honest Northern men, but calls every "carpet-bagger" a thief, which is not the truth by a good deal. But these fellows—many of them long-faced, and with eyes rolled up, are greatly concerned for the education of the Blacks, and for the salvation of their souls. [Great laughter.] "Let us pray," they say; but they spell pray with an "e," and, thus spelled, they obey the apostolic injunction to "pray without ceasing."

Fellow-citizens, the time has been, and still is, when it was perilous to be known as a Republican or an Abolitionist in the South; but it never called the blush of shame to any man's cheek to be so called, until these thieving carpet-baggers went there—never! [Applause.] They got into the Legislatures; they went to issuing State bonds; they pretended to use them in aid of railroads and other improvements. But the improvements were not made, and the bonds stuck in the issuers' pockets. That is the pity of it.

"Well," some say, "you have just such thieves at the North." Yes, we have—too many of them! [Applause.] But the South was already impoverished—was bankrupt—without money, without thrift, almost without food; and these fellows went there robbing and swindling when there was very little to steal, and taking the last ten-cent shinplaster off of dead men's eyes. They were recognized by the late aristocracy not merely as thieves, but as enemies. Says Byron's Greek minstrel,

> "A tyrant—but our masters then
> Were still at least our countrymen.'

Thus we regard the men who annually rob us at Albany, at Trenton, and at Harrisburg. They do not carry their plunder out of the State, when they get any. These fellows do! The South was not merely beaten in the late contest; she was profoundly astonished by the result. Her people have not fairly got over their amazement at their defeat; and what they see of us are these thieves, who represent the North to their jaundiced vision, and, representing it, they disgrace it.

They are the greatest obstacle to the triumph and permanent ascendancy of Republican principles at the South, and as such I denounce them. [Applause.]

"Well, then, do you justify the Ku-Klux?" I am asked. Justify them *in what?* If they should choose to catch a hundred or two of these thieves, place them tenderly astride of rails, and bear them quietly and peaceably across the Ohio, I should of course condemn the act, as I condemn all violence; but the tears live in a very small onion that would water all my sorrow for those. [Laughter and applause.] But they do nothing like that; they don't go for the thieving carpet-baggers; but they skulk around wretched cabins, and drag out inoffensive negroes, to lash and torture them, merely for standing up for their rights as men. For this, I *do* execrate the Ku-Klux. I say they are a disgrace to Southern chivalry; and they would be drummed out of the South if there were any true chivalry there.

But it has been reported very widely that at Vicksburg, addressing a mainly Southern audience, and trying to awaken in them something of the sentiment of nationality and patriotism which burns in a true American bosom, I said that I trusted the time would come when we of the North would honor Lee and Stonewall Jackson. I did not say that. What I did say was that I hoped the time would come when Americans North, as well as Americans South, would feel a just pride in the soldierly achievements and military character of Lee and Stonewall Jackson, just as I trusted the late Confederates would learn to feel a patriotic pride in the achievements of Grant and Sherman, and Thomas and Sheridan. I said that, or something very like it. Possibly, you are not willing to go so far as that. Very well, there is no hurry. Take your time; I can wait. Yes, I can wait.

THE NEW DEPARTURE.

But, gentlemen, my voice fails, yet I want to say a few words about the New Departure. When men are in a bad fix, I reckon they had better depart from it; and I fully justify those Democrats who have determined to depart from the foolish old business of running their heads against a stone wall. If I were there, I should depart; and I think it well for them to do it; and, since they do it, I am not inclined to criticise the manner too severely, nor to judge them too harshly. I have made a rule for some time never to conjure up a bad motive for a good action. They are where they ought not to be; they propose to depart, and I think they should.

Our Ohio friends do not take quite so charitable a view of the New Departure as I do. They say there was a particularly rough character once, who was noted for violating the Sabbath, among other bad deeds. But finally he became converted, "got religion," and joined the church.

All right. One day, a gentleman came along and asked a neighbor of his, "Do you see any great change in Nokes since he joined the church?" "O yes, very great; he used to go out chopping Sunday mornings with his ax swung over his shoulder; now he carries it under his coat." [Laughter.] Gentlemen, I am very glad that the Democratic party has taken off its shoulder the ax which it has wielded so many years in deadly hostility to the rights of the Colored race. I am glad even if it has put it under its coat; but I hope it will think better of it and put it back into the wood-house, and meet the Blacks with open hands, saying, "We are going to treat each of you just as he shall deserve to be treated, no matter what is the color of his skin." I do believe they mean this—the most of them. I believe they mean hereafter to wear their Democracy somewhat more than skin-deep. At any rate, I shall urge and encourage them to do so.

Fellow-citizens: I would not make too much of this New Departure. I do not understand these gentlemen even to profess any penitence for their past warfare against the Equal Rights of Men. I don't understand them even to promise that they will never renew that warfare. I only understand them as pledged to this extent: They admit that the three Republican amendments to the Federal Constitution are now a part of that Constitution, and, that, while they shall remain there, they must be obeyed. That I understand to be the extent of the New Departure; and I deem it worth a great deal. So long as they admit that these Amendments are in, I shall feel pretty sure that they are not likely to get them out. I shall rest content that the rights of all men, being citizens of the United States, are safe under the guaranties of the Federal Constitution.

Twenty-five years ago, I stood at the poll of the XIXth ward of this city all one rainy, chill November day, peddling ballots for Equal Suffrage. I got many Whigs to take them, but not one Democrat. Again in 1860—not eleven years ago—I again stood at my poll all day, and handed out the same kind of vote; and I do not remember that a single Democrat took one. Some Republicans, even, would not take them; but no Democrat would.

I believe in Human Progress. I believe that men are rather wiser and better to-day than they were twelve years ago; and here is proof of it. It is not two years since our Democratic State Legislature withdrew the consent given by its Republican predecessor to the XVth Amendment, and, by a party vote, so far as New York could do it, they tried to defeat that amendment. Now, we have a New Departure. Was it not high time? I think it was.

Fellow-citizens: I am weary, weary, of this sterile strife concerning the fundamental principles of republican institutions. I am tired of trying

to teach Democrats the A, B, Cs of Democracy. I rejoice to know that they have taken a New Departure; and I tell you that, when they have once taken it, it will be a great deal harder to get back to the old ground than to go on. Some one says, "Isn't it going to put the Republicans out of power?" I cannot tell. Immediately, I think not. Mr. Burke well says: "Confidence is a plant of slow growth;" and I think it will take some time for the people to realize that the Democrats mean to uphold Equal Rights—some time for their own folks to realize it—a great deal longer to make any Black man believe that they mean it.

I don't anticipate any sudden change in the relative strength of parties, because of the New Departure. Ultimately, I think, it will strengthen the Democrats. "Then," one says, "*you* will go out of power." Yes, we shall some time, no doubt. If it were to be my fate to go out this moment, and every year of my life thereafter to be in the minority, prostrate and powerless, I should still thank God, most humbly and heartily, that he allowed me to live in an age, and to be a part of the generation that witnessed the downfall and extinction of American Slavery. [Prolonged applause.]

Fellow-citizens: I trust the day is not distant wherein, putting behind us the things that concern the Past, we shall defer to that grand old injunction of the Bible: "Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward." I am weary of fighting over issues that ought to be dead—that logically *were* dead years ago. When Slavery died, I thought that we ought speedily to have ended all that grew out of it by Universal Amnesty and Impartial Suffrage. [Applause.] I think so still; and that, if the Democratic party shall concede Impartial Suffrage, the Republican party will concede Universal Amnesty; if not, it will have a *very* short lease of power. So, then, friends, I summon you all, Republicans and Democrats, to prepare for the new issues and new struggles that visibly open before us. In the times not far distant, I trust, we shall consider questions mainly of industrial policy—questions of national advancement—questions concerning the best means whereby our different parties may, through coöperation, or through rivalry, strive to promote the prosperity, the happiness, and the true glory of the American people. To that contest, I invite you. For that contest, I would prepare you. And so, trusting that the blood shed in the past will be a sufficient atonement for the sins of the past, and that we are entering upon a grand New Departure, not for one party only, but for the whole country—a departure from strife to harmony, from devastation to construction, from famine and desolation to peace and plenty—I bid you, friends and fellow-citizens, an affectionate good-night. [Prolonged cheers and applause.]

THE END.

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE

DURING THE CAMPAIGN.

THE TRIBUNE is not and will never more be a party organ; but it is ardently enlisted in the contest now waging for Civil Service Reform and for One Presidential Term as essential to that Reform. It accepts the Cincinnati Platform as a terse and a forcible exposition of the political right and wrong, the needs and hopes of To-Day, and looks hopefully to Universal Amnesty as essential to the restoration of a genuine fraternity between North and South, and of mutual confidence and good will between White and Black. It believes the People are preparing to break the rusty shackles of mere bygone partisanship, and it hopes for a result next November which will cheer and strengthen the champions of Peace and Good Will. It will issue no campaign edition, but proffers to all who believe its further diffusion may serve the Good Cause its regular editions at the lowest possible prices.

The virtual surrender by the Democratic party of its hostility to Equal Rights regardless of Color has divested our current politics of half their bygone intensity. However parties may henceforth rise or fall, it is clear that the fundamental principles which have hitherto honorably distinguished the Republicans are henceforth to be regarded as practically accepted by the whole country. The right of every man to his own limbs and sinews—the equality of all citizens before the law—the inability of a State to enslave any portion of its people—the duty of the Union to guarantee to every citizen the full enjoyment of his liberty until he forfeits it by crime—such are the broad and firm foundations of our National edifice; and palsied be the hand which shall seek to displace them! Though not yet twenty years old, the Republican party has completed the noble fabric of Emancipation, and may fairly invoke thereon the sternest judgment of Man and the benignant smile of God.

Henceforth, the mission of our Republic is one of Peaceful Progress. To protect the weak and the humble from violence and oppression—to extend the boundaries and diffuse the blessings of Civilization—to stimulate Ingenuity to the production of new inventions for economizing Labor and thus enlarging Production—to draw nearer to each other the producers of Food and of Fabrics, of Grains and of Metals, and thus enhance the gains of Industry by reducing the cost of transportation and exchanges between farmers and artisans—such is the inspiring task to which this Nation now addresses itself, and by which it would fain contribute to the progress, enlightenment, and happiness of our race. To this great and good work THE TRIBUNE contributes its zealous, persistent efforts.

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